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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 000664

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: NPC CLOSES MARCH 13 WITH PASSAGE OF GOVERNMENT
WORK REPORTS

REF: A. BEIJING 649
[1](#)B. BEIJING 633
[1](#)C. BEIJING 614
[1](#)D. BEIJING 607
[1](#)E. BEIJING 589
[1](#)F. BEIJING 580
[1](#)G. BEIJING 559
[1](#)H. BEIJING 531
[1](#)I. 08 BEIJING 1024
[1](#)J. 07 BEIJING 1790
[1](#)K. 06 BEIJING 4760
[1](#)L. 05 BEIJING 4273
[1](#)M. 04 BEIJING 4227
[1](#)N. 03 BEIJING 3087

Classified By: Political Internal Unit Chief
Dan Kritenbrink. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) The 2009 NPC closed March 13 with a brief final ceremony at which delegates approved by overwhelming margins the various "work reports" presented earlier in the NPC session. Although the vote totals revealed that opposition from delegates to the government's reports has increased slightly over the past three years, particularly regarding the reports of the Supreme People's Court and Supreme People's Procuratorate, the results remained within historically consistent margins. Comment: With no legislation on the docket and no personnel changes, this year's NPC appeared particularly uneventful. In the face of significant challenges including the global financial crisis, the session seemed designed primarily to demonstrate Chinese confidence and unity to both domestic and international audiences. End Summary and Comment.

VOTES ON WORK REPORTS AT NPC CLOSING

[1](#)2. (SBU) China's annual political spectacle, the "two meetings" (the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC)) formally concluded on the morning of March 13. NPC Chairman Wu Bangguo presided over the closing session, and in front of the entire Chinese leadership, including the 25 members of the CCP Politburo, as well as the nearly 3,000 NPC delegates assembled in the Great Hall of the People, Wu required only 22 minutes to make opening remarks, lead an anemic singing of the PRC national anthem (this was the first year delegates were required to sing), conduct voting on the six government "work reports" presented earlier in the NPC session and deliver a perfunctory closing address that declared the session to have been "victorious." As expected, all of the reports were passed by overwhelming majorities.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The vote totals nevertheless revealed that opposition from NPC delegates to the government work reports has continued to increase slightly over the past three years

(see below), despite remaining within historically consistent margins. (Note: refs I-N contain vote totals for 1998-2008.) The Supreme People's Court (SPC) and Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) reports, in particular, continued to garner the lowest levels of support, passing with 75 and 76 percent of delegates' votes, respectively, reflecting long-standing dissatisfaction over corruption within China's criminal justice system. Delegates reacted with an audible gasp when the totals for those two reports were released, given the (relatively) high number of opposition votes.

THE VOTE TOTALS

14. (U) The voting results by delegates on the standard six government "work reports" for 2009, 2008 and 2007 are as follows:

2009 NPC VOTE TOTALS:

Report	For	Against	Abstain	No Vote	Percent
Govt Work Rpt	2824	42	22	10	97
Econ/Soc Dev	2669	145	71	13	92
Budget	2440	315	124	19	84
NPC Work Rpt	2721	99	68	10	94
SPC Work Rpt	2172	519	192	15	75
SPP Work Rpt	2210	505	162	21	76

2008 NPC VOTE TOTALS:

BEIJING 00000664 002 OF 002

Report	For	Against	Abstain	No Vote	Percent
Govt Work Rpt	2885	32	12	3	98
Econ/Soc Dev	2747	125	55	5	94
Budget	2462	362	102	6	84
NPC Work Rpt	2846	57	23	6	97
SPC Work Rpt	2287	521	120	4	78
SPP Work Rpt	2270	514	142	6	77

2007 NPC VOTE TOTALS:

Report	For	Against	Abstain	No Vote	Percent
Govt Work Rpt	2862	17	10	0	99
Econ/Soc Dev	2737	92	56	4	95
Budget	2532	220	131	6	88
NPC Work Rpt	2826	30	30	3	98
SPC Work Rpt	2395	359	127	8	83
SPP Work Rpt	2414	342	128	5	84

DELEGATES' VIEWS

15. (C) A random sampling by PolOffs of delegates' views after the closing revealed that NPC deputies generally remained "satisfied" with the session, which contained "no surprises."

A delegate from Heilongjiang said he thought the government's explanation of China's response to the global financial crisis was the most important outcome, though he noted there had also been a great deal of focus on domestic issues, including nettlesome social problems. Though the general direction of government policies is "correct," the delegate said a number of "adjustments" will be required as central policies undoubtedly will encounter "difficulties" in the year ahead. A delegate from Jiangxi and one from Guangdong agreed that this year's session was "normal," asserting that higher opposition to the SPC and SPP reports was "natural" and in line with past years' results. A representative from Sichuan played up his role as an NPC deputy, saying that he had "fulfilled his responsibilities" and had even successfully put forward seven proposals of his own.

BIO NOTE: HU JINTAO ENTHUSIASTIC AT NPC CLOSE

16. (C) PolOff observed that the normally reserved President Hu Jintao appeared particularly engaged and enthusiastic following the close of the NPC session. On the dais as delegates filed out of the Great Hall of the People, Hu energetically shook Premier Wen's hand and engaged in a relatively lengthy conversation with Wen before being joined by Vice President Xi Jinping. As Xi began to accompany Hu toward the exit, other leaders stopped by to chat with the President as he leisurely strolled toward the edge of the dais. Hu ended up being one of the last senior leaders to depart.

COMMENT

17. (C) With no legislation on the docket and no personnel changes, this year's NPC seemed particularly uneventful. Despite focusing on the global financial crisis and addressing social problems, China's leaders appeared to play it particularly "safe" by providing few details on proposals discussed during the NPC sessions. Rather, in the face of significant challenges, the 2009 NPC seemed designed primarily to demonstrate Chinese confidence and unity to both domestic and international audiences.

WEINSTEIN